



CITY NEWS

Police Department
455 N. Main Wichita, KS 67202
(316) 268-4340 FAX (316) 268-4566
www.wichita.gov

DATE: June 16, 2005
CONTACT: Janet Johnson
Assistant to the Chief of Police
(316) 268-4340

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**** Media Advisory ****

Youth lead project for local skateboard area

When vandalisms and other criminal activity by teens peaked last fall in the Orchard Park area, the Wichita Police Department and the city staff at Orchard Park took action.

A group of approximately 15 youth were identified as causing problems at the park, skateboarding in the streets and loitering in the neighborhood. Officer Paul Zamorano, the community policing beat coordinator, made contact with the youth and opened a dialogue.

Officer Zamorano and the other members of the 15 beat team started working with the youth, and the youth expressed a desire to have a skateboard area. Officer Zamorano told them that he would help them with their endeavor, but in exchange they would have to take a significant amount of responsibility for

--more--

monitoring Orchard Park and playing a role in reducing vandalism and crime there. At their first meeting, only two youth and three parents showed up, but they didn't let this dissuade them and at their second meeting, more than 50 youth and their parents were in attendance.

With Officer Zamorano helping them navigate the system, the youth went to work on their skateboard project. They first approached the Orchard Park Neighborhood Association, seeking their approval to move forward. Not only did the Neighborhood Association approve of the project, but they jumped on board and offered to assist in any way possible.

The youth group, with support from the Neighborhood Association, presented their idea of adding the skateboard recreational amenity to Orchard Park to the Board of Park Commissioners. The Board unanimously supported the project, so the youth then presented their proposal to City Council member Sharon Fearey and the District Advisory Board VI, where they also received unanimous approval.

The group immediately began working on securing the funding for their project. With the help of Officer Zamorano and the Orchard Park Neighborhood Association, the group of youth began organizing a number of fundraising events.

One of those events will occur this Saturday, June 25, at the Party in the Park event sponsored by the Orchard Park Neighborhood Association and slated at

--more--

the park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The youth will be selling "Live To Skate" wristbands and t-shirts.

A number of private businesses have also made significant financial and in-kind contributions to the project, according to Officer Zamorano. These include the Quik-Trip Corp., Wal-Mart, Cornejo and Sons, the Wichita Area Builder's Association and The Pusher.

During the months of October and November of 2004 there were around 15 vandalisms recorded in Orchard Park. Since December, there have been no vandalisms in the park.

For more information, please contact Officer Paul Zamorano or Captain Terry Nelson at the Patrol West Bureau at 337-9400.